

BEQUEST OF LAFAYETTE.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

TRANSMITTING

*An engraved copy of the Declaration of Independence, bequeathed by the late General Lafayette to the Congress of the United States.*

DECEMBER 4, 1834.

Read, and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

*To the House of Representatives :*

I transmit to Congress a communication addressed to me by Mr. George Washington Lafayette, accompanying a copy of the Declaration of Independence, engraved on copper, which his illustrious father bequeathed to Congress, to be placed in their library as a last tribute of respect, patriotic love, and affection for his adopted country.

I have a mournful satisfaction in transmitting this precious bequest of that great and good man, who, through a long life, under many vicissitudes, and in both hemispheres, sustained the principles of civil liberty asserted in that memorable declaration, and who, from his youth to the last moment of his life, cherished for our beloved country the most generous attachment.

ANDREW JACKSON.

WASHINGTON, December 4, 1834.

PARIS, June 15, 1834.

SIR: A great misfortune has given me more than one solemn and important duty to fulfil; and the ardent desire of accomplishing with fidelity my father's last will emboldens me to claim the patronage of the President of the United States, and his benevolent intervention, when I am obliged respectfully and mournfully to address the Senate and Representatives of a whole nation.

Our forever beloved parent possessed a copperplate, on which was inscribed the first engraved copy of the American Declaration of Independence; and his last intention, in departing this world, was that the precious plate should be presented to the Congress of the United States, to be deposited in their library, as a last tribute of respect, patriotic love, and affection for his adopted country.

Will it be permitted to me, a faithful disciple of that American school whose principles are so admirably exposed in that immortal declaration, to hope that you, sir, would do me the honor to communicate this letter to both Houses of Congress, at the same time that, in the name of his afflicted family, you would present to them my venerated father's gift.

In craving such an important favor, sir, the son of General Lafayette, the adopted grandson of Washington, knows and shall never forget that he would become unworthy of it if he was ever to cease to be a French and American patriot.

With the utmost respect, I am, sir,

Your devoted and obedient servant,

GEORGE W. LAFAYETTE.

*Extrait d'une lettre adressée par le Général Lafayette à ses enfans, et destinée à n'être ouverte pas eux qu'après sa mort.*

En cas que je meure avant d'avoir fait un testament, je desire que la Déclaration d'Independance de ma chambre, la première qui ait été gravée, soit placée dans la bibliothèque du Congrès.

LAFAYETTE.

PARIS, 10 Février, 1830.

WASHINGTON, December 4, 1831.

PARIS, June 15, 1834.